



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



OPERATION RAV PROGRESSES

South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs staff continue to man the Operation RAV booth at the State Capitol.

SDDVA Field Officer Steve Oliva manned the booth last week and was quite pleased with the contacts that were made. "We reached veterans and widows that would have not otherwise have been reached," said Oliva.

"We've **reached** veterans that previously were not eligible for benefits—but now are. We've **reached** veterans that were previously denied benefits—but due to changes in their life situation (income) - are now eligible, said Oliva.

The Department is now in the progress of working with the County and Tribal Veterans Service Officers to coordinate all the open houses in each of the counties. The Department estimates that they will be participating in over 130 of these events throughout 2014.

This is in addition to the normal outreach activities that the Department participates in.

Secretary Zimmerman will be addressing Operation RAV on Inside *KEL-OLAND* TV Sunday evening, January 26, at 10:30 pm (CT).



Inside this issue:

MJF State Veterans Home Update	2
Yellow Ribbon Event	2
Heroes Among Us	3
VA Legal Services Program for Veterans	4
VA Creative Arts Program	5
OMK—Purple Up	5
Upcoming Events	6



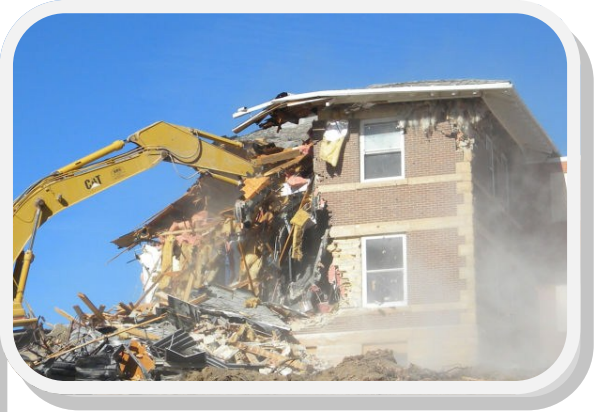
Heroes Among Us—showcasing 125 South Dakota veterans.



BUILDING FOUR LEVELED - PROGRESS CONTINUES ON NEW VETERANS HOME

Work continues as the site is prepared for the new Michael J. Fitzmaurice State Veterans Home.

Tuesday morning, workers began to level Building 4, the old infirmary. The picture below shows what was left by the close of the day on Wednesday. Blasting and fill work continue.



SDDVA STAFF PARTICIPATE IN YELLOW RIBBON EVENT

The South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs participated in the DOD Yellow Ribbon 30-Day Reintegration event in Rapid City this past weekend. The Yellow Ribbon was held for the 129th MPAD.

SDDVA Field Officer Kevin Swanson provided an update on state and federal benefits.

Other presenters were the JAG, TRICARE, Military One Source, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Military Family Life Consultants, ESGR, Department of Labor and financial consultants.

The Yellow Ribbon's are designed to ensure reserve-component service members have access to the information and resources they need to reintegrate with their families, their communities and their employers effectively.

"The more we're able to do up front, the more successful we are preparing people, the greater the likelihood of a successful reintegration on the back end.



HEROES AMONG US

Donald Moe served in the United States Army from 1951 to 1953. He received his basic training in Fort Jackson, S.C. and served nine months in Korea where he was awarded the Purple Heart.

Don is a 60-year member of the American Legion, where he served a total of ten years as commander of Post 93 in Letcher as well as adjutant, treasurer, and membership chairman for many years. He is a past county commander and sergeant at arms.

Don stays very active in his community through Bingo parties, the annual turkey night, the Santa Claus event, annual talent night, pie socials, pancake feeds, military funerals, the annual Memorial Day service, Veteran's Day programs, and visits to schools and nursing homes. Don faithfully attends all Legion conferences and conventions and participates in many other veteran and community functions.

Don is very proud of receiving his Honorary High School Diploma a year ago from Sanborn Central High School.

Don and his wife live in rural Letcher. Thank you Don, for your service to this great county and to South Dakota's veterans!!!!



HEROES AMONG US

David C. Kogel was born on June 18, 1950. He attended grade school at Rock Valley grade school in Jerauld County and high school at Lane High School. Dave graduated in May of 1968. He entered the service on October 23, 1969, after basic training in Ft Lewis, Washington and AIT in Aberdeen Proving Ground in Aberdeen, Maryland for engine and powertrain repair.

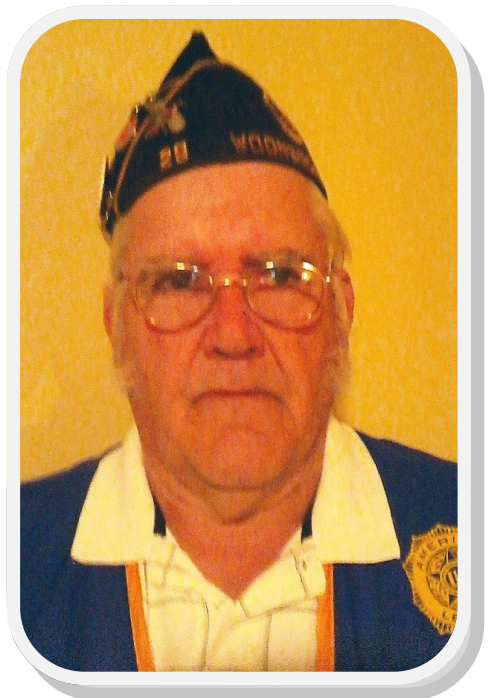
Dave went to Vietnam and served with the 23rd Infantry Division (America Division) with B Troop 1st Squadron 1st Cavalry, an armored unit in Chu Lai, Vietnam, from May 1970 to April 1971.

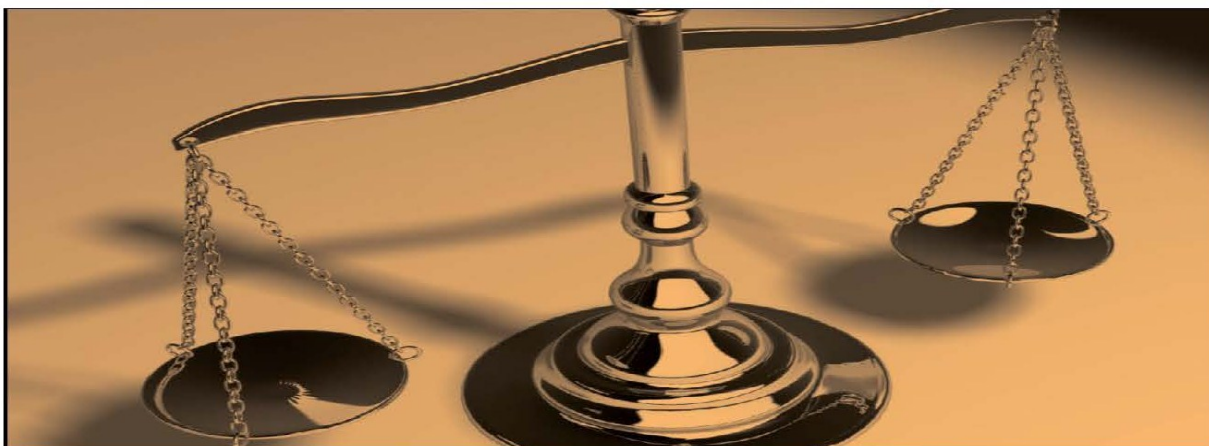
Following that he was assigned to serve with Company C85th Maintenance Battalion in Hanau, Germany till June 1972.

Dave is currently a 29 year member of the Woonsocket Post 29. He has served as the finance officer, post commander, and currently post adjutant.

Dave oversees the bingo program and helps with Post projects such as flag etiquette and the chili and oyster stew feed on Veterans Day. Dave assists veterans in obtaining handicap equipment for veterans. Dave is also a chairman for the Jerauld and Sanborn County Relay for Life for the American Cancer Society.

Thank you Dave, for your service to this great county and all you do for South Dakota's veterans!!!





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**MARCH 21, 2014
9:00 AM-3:00 PM
SIOUX FALLS VA
4TH FLOOR AUDITORIUM**

Licensed attorneys, U.S.D. law students (*student assistance does not constitute legal advice*), Veteran Services Officers, VA Benefits and VA Homeless Program staff will be available throughout the day to assist Veterans with questions, legal forms, and counsel.

For more information contact:

Eddie Hruska - Veterans' Legal Education Group 605-521-6419

Disclaimer: VA assumes no responsibility for the professional ability or integrity of legal services provided. This referral does not constitute a recommendation or endorsement by VA.

VETERANS SOUGHT FOR CREATIVE ARTS

The Sioux Falls VA Health Care System encourages veterans who want to share their artistic side to enter visual art, creative writing, music, drama, comedy, dance, and other art for the local competition for the National Veterans Creative Arts Festival.

Veterans are invited to participate in the 24th annual VA Variety Show on March 1, 2014, at 2:00 PM in the VA 4th floor auditorium. Veterans, volunteers, VA staff and family members will showcase their performing arts with musical selections, comedy, drama, and more. Please contact Diane Larsen at 605-373-4143 or 800-316-8387, Ext. 6248 by February 12, to schedule an audition. Veterans who perform in this show may advance to the National Creative Arts competition. Volunteers are also needed behind the scenes.

An art show on March 4, 2014, will allow Veterans who receive treatment at VA facilities the opportunity to participate in creative self-expression in visual arts and to gain recognition for their accomplishments. Each veteran may enter up to two pieces of art or crafts, which were created within the past year. All entries must be received by Friday, February 28. Please call 605-333-6889 or 800-316-8387, Ext. 6889 for information about entering.

The art show will take place in the fourth floor auditorium of the Sioux Falls VA Medical Center from 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM. A reception follows at 2:00 PM, and the public is invited.

Employees will also display their arts and crafts during this show but will not compete with veterans.



OPERATION MILITARY KIDS

April is the Month of the Military Child! Join us in celebrating our Military Children with a **PURPLE UP** event in your community and/or schools!

Purple symbolizes all branches of the military and as a tribute to our brave military men and women.

This is a great opportunity to work with your community leaders, CTVSOs, veterans service organizations and National Guard Units to support and honor our military children. How????

- Invite news and media outlets to write a story about **Purple Up!** For Military Kids.
- Invite schools to participate in **Purple Up** Day.
- Engage fraternal organizations and community groups to participate in **Purple Up**.
- Request local businesses to post **Purple Up** messages on their signs.
- Ask stores and restaurants to put a **Purple Up** message in their business window.

Upcoming Events

2014

Jan. 24-26—American Legion Mid Winter Conference—Crossroads—Huron
Jan. 25-26- 235th MP Reintegration 30 Day Yellow Ribbon Event—Chamberlain Cedar Shore Resort
Jan. 29—Yankton Sioux Tribes Presentation of Congressional Code Talker Medals—Ft. Randall Casino—Pickstown—4:30 pm
Jan. 31—SD Veterans Council Breakfast with Legislators—6:30 am
Feb 2-4—VFW Legislative Conference—Post 2038—Pierre
Feb. 6—American Legion Legislative Reception—Post 8—Pierre
Feb. 9—Four Chaplains Service—United Methodist Church—Sturgis—1:30 pm (MST)
Feb. 15—Veterans Benefits Fair—Washington Pavilion—Sioux Falls—1:00 pm
Feb. 15—Valentines for Veterans Concert—Washington Pavilion—Sioux Falls—3:00 pm
Feb 15-16- 152nd Reintegration 30 Day Yellow Ribbon Event—Sioux Falls
Feb. 18-19—SDDVA New VSO Orientation—Sioux Falls
Mar. 21—Veterans Legal Services Workshop—VA Sioux Falls—4th Floor—9:00 am
Apr. 5-6—152nd Yellow Ribbon
Apr. 7—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—BHNC—9:00 am
May 2-4—DAV Conference—Ramkota Hotel—Aberdeen
Jun. 19-22—American Legion Conference—Ramkota Hotel—Pierre
Jul. 7—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—BHNC—9:00 am
Aug. 6—DOL Veterans Job Fair—Augustana College Elmen Center—10:00 am—2:00 pm
Aug. 25-29—NACVSO Training Ramkota Hotel—Pierre
Oct. 6—BHNC Unaccompanied Veterans Memorial Service—BHNC—9:00 am

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